

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 05256 131748Z
ACTION INR-07

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R 130826Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2658
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMCONSUL MADRAS
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PGOV PINR IN
SUBJECT: BIO DATA ON AGRICULTURE MINISTER PRAKASH SINGH BADAL

1. AKALI DAL LEADER AND FORMER PUNJAB CHIEF MINISTER
PRAKASH SINGH BADAL WAS SWORN IN MARCH 26 AS A MEMBER
OF PRIME MINISTER DESAI'S CABINET AND WAS ALLOCATED
THE AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION PORTFOLIO MARCH 28.
BORN ON APRIL 21, 1925, IN THE PART OF THE PUNJAB WHICH NOW LIES IN
PAKISTAN, BADAL COMES FROM ONE OF THE
WEALTHIEST AND MOST INFLUENTIAL LANDOWNING FAMILIES
IN THE PUNJAB. FOLLOWING PUNJABI CUSTOM, THE SURNAME
BADAL DENOTES HIS VILLAGE. HE IS KNOWN AMONG FRIENDS
AND RELATIVES AS "PASHJI".

2. FOLLOWING HIS GRADUATION IN 1946 FROM FOREMAN
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CHRISTIAN COLLEGE IN LAHORE, BADAL ENTERED ACTIVE
POLITICS THE FOLLOWING YEAR WHEN HE JOINED THE SIKH ORGAN-
IZATION, THE AKALI DAL, AND TOOK AN ACTIVE PART IN THE
AGITATION FOR A PUNJABI-SPEAKING STATE. HE WAS SARPANCH
(CHIEF) OF HIS VILLAGE PANCHAYAT AND CHAIRMAN OF THE
BLOCK DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE. HE WAS ELECTED TO THE
PUNJAB LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY IN 1957 AS A CONGRESS

CANDIDATE. (FOR A BRIEF PERIOD, THE AKALI DAL WITHDREW FROM CONTESTING POLITICAL OFFICES AND MANY OF ITS MEMBERS RAN FOR OFFICE AS CONGRESSMEN.) HE LOST HIS SEAT IN THE 1967 ELECTIONS TO A CONGRESS CANDIDATE, BUT WAS RE-ELECTED AS AN AKALI IN THE 1969 MID-TERM POLL. BADAL BECAME DEVELOPMENT MINISTER IN THE AKALI-JAN SANGH COALITION GOVERNMENT, HOLDING THE PORFOLIOS OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, PANCHAYATI RAJ, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY, DAIRYING AND FISHERIES. HE BECAME CHIEF MINISTER OF THE PUNJAB IN 1970, BUT HIS GOVERNMENT COLLAPSED THE NEXT YEAR WHEN SEVERAL AKALI MLA'S QUIT THE PARTY. SINCE 1971 HE HAD SERVED AS LEADER OF THE AKALI OPPOSITION IN THE STATE ASSEMBLY.

3. THE AKALI DAL SUPPORTED MRS. GANDHI IN HER EFFORT TO ELECT V.V. GIRI AS PRESIDENT OF INDIA IN 1969. IN LATER YEARS, HOWEVER, BADAL AND HIS COLLEAGUES PARTED COMPANY WITH HER. A FEW MONTHS BEFORE THE 1972 STATE ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS, THE GOI INSTITUTED A COMMISSION OF INQUIRY TO PROBE CHARGES OF CORRUPTION AND ABUSE OF POWER ALLEDGEDLY COMMITTED BY BADAL AND HIS MINISTERS WHILE IN OFFICE. WHEN HE LAUNCHED THE JANATA/AKALI DAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN IN LATE JANUARY OF THIS YEAR, MORARJI DESAI CLAIMED THAT THE CHARGES WERE AT THE WORST MINOR INDISCRETIONS.

4. BADAL WAS DETAINED UNDER MISA DURING MOST OF THE EMERGENCY AND WAS RELEASED ONLY IN JANUARY. HE WAS ELECTED TO THE LOK SABHA FROM FARIDKOT DISTRICT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN THE PUNJAB BY A MARGIN OF OVER 100,000 VOTES. HE IS THE ONLY AKALI MEMBER OF DESAI'S CABINET. BADAL IS MARRIED AND HAS TWO CHILDREN. SCHNEIDER

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Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 13-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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